

Putting Research to Work for Military Families



Focus:
Multiple
Branches

Military, Work, and Health Characteristics of Separated and Active Service Members From the Study for Employment Retention of Veterans (SERVe)

Hammer, L. B., Wan, W. H., Brockwood, K. J., & Mohr, C. D. (2017). Military, work, and health characteristics of separated and active service members from the study for employment retention of veterans (SERVe). *Military Psychology, 1-22*.
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SUMMARY: An examination regarding post-9/11 Service members and Veterans employed in the civilian workforce was conducted. Demographic and descriptive information were collected to explore differences between Service members who are still active in the National Guard/Reserves and Veterans who are no longer Active Duty military or National Guard/Reserves. Information regarding perceived support at work and home, physical and psychological health, and work characteristics was gathered. Differences regarding the health and well-being between those separated from military service and those actively serving in the National Guard/Reserves were highlighted.

KEY FINDINGS:

- Approximately 20% of the sample had experienced a traumatic brain injury and roughly 9-20% of Veterans and National Guard/Reservists had positive screenings for posttraumatic stress disorder.
- Service members recently separated from Active Duty or separated from the National Guard/Reservists often reported less social support and worse physical and psychological health compared to active National Guard/Reservists.
- Most participants worked a typical 40-hour work week and reported high job satisfaction and low intentions to quit their job.
- Most participants reported having adequate support from family, friends, supervisors, and coworkers with the exception of Service members recently separated from Active Duty.

IMPLICATIONS FOR PROGRAMS:

Programs could:

- Provide education to Service members regarding the process of transitioning to the civilian workforce
- Disseminate information regarding the organizations supportive of hiring Veterans and National Guard/Reservists
- Offer workshops that encourage Veterans and National Guard/Reservists to pursue occupations that utilize military skills

IMPLICATIONS FOR POLICIES:

Policies could:

- Collaborate with civilian organizations in an effort to ease the transition from military service to the civilian workforce for departing Service members
- Recommend professional education for leaders of civilian organizations regarding unique challenges departing National Guard/Reservists may encounter when entering the civilian workforce
- Support organizations that work to increase job satisfaction among Veterans and National Guard/Reservists employed in the civilian workforce

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METHODS

- Participants were recruited through organizations known to hire Veterans and National Guard/Reservists.
- Participants had 10 days to complete surveys assessing demographics, military characteristics, work and work-family characteristics, supportive characteristics, and physical and psychological health.
- Researchers analyzed the support Veterans and National Guard/Reservists receive at work and home and their psychological and physical health to understand ways the civilian workforce can improve in these areas.

PARTICIPANTS

- The sample was comprised of 493 employed Veterans and National Guard/Reservists from 35 participating civilian organizations.
- The sample included three groups: Separated Active Duty Service members (n=235), separated National Guard/Reservists (n=171), and those still serving with the National Guard/Reservists (n=87).
- To be eligible, participants had to work at least 20 hours a week with a participating organization and must have served in any branch of the U.S. military after December 31, 2001.
- Roughly 83% of participants were White and male with an average age of 39 years old.

LIMITATIONS

- This study only focused on Veterans and National Guard/Reservists in the civilian workforce who were recruited from organizations willing to participate in the study, which limits the ability to generalize the findings to National Guard/Reservists and Veterans not in the civilian workforce.
- There may be self-report bias because some participants might have been hesitant to answer the questions honestly due to being concerned that it will affect their job.
- Since the sample only included organizations in the Pacific Northwest and Veterans and National Guard/Reservists who were employed, results may not be representative of those in other regions of the United States or those who are unemployed.

AVENUES FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

Future research could:

- Examine associations between social support at work and home, military background, and health
- Expand the study to include organizations, National Guard/Reservists, and Veterans located in other areas of the United States
- Include the perspectives of female Veterans and National Guard/Reservists and military personnel of different racial/ethnic backgrounds

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